

ALL KINDS

PAINTS

For all Purposes

EZRA W. THAYER

124-130 E. Wash. St.

127-133 E. Adams St.

HOW ROOSEVELT DAM
SECURED ITS NAMEIt is No Longer Known Officially as
the Tonto Dam, Which Name Has
Become a Slander to its Fair Fame.

The irrigation editor of The Republican was strolling down the street the other day when he met Constant Reader, who by the way is not a farmer nor an irrigationist even though he likes to "wet up" a bit now and then. Mr. Constant Reader took him to task about a matter which had been preying on his mind for a long time. He is an old-timer in these parts and something of an antiquarian and archivist. He clings to the customs of the older days when Arizona was really what a lot of eastern people think it is still, a trifle wild and woolly and at least distinctive and characteristic in its nomenclature, as witness such proper names as Humbug creek, Tip Top and Vulture mines, Squaw Peak, Picket Post, Tombstone, Silent and other unique names of towns, Superstition mountains, etc. etc. His kick was that the big dam of the Salt River storage project was persistently called the "Roosevelt" dam when the right name for it was "Tonto" dam.

Constant Reader said he had interviewed his neighbors, Vox Populi, E. Pluribus Unum, Citizen, "One Who Knows" and "Anonymous," on this matter and they all agreed that The Republican was at fault in the matter; that it had gone here worshipping and insisted on calling it Roosevelt dam in honor of the president regardless of its time-honored title of Tonto, and the practice had been construed as a direct slap in the faces of the old pioneers. He said moreover, that he had taken occasion within recent weeks to

discuss the building of the dam with Supervising Engineer H.H. and with Arthur P. Davis during his last visit to these parts, and that both of these men had referred to it as the "Tonto" dam. He believed that was the highest authority possible for Mr. Davis has been generally credited with the paternity of that structure and if a man don't know the names of his own children, to whom shall the seeker after information apply?

Constant Reader would not be satisfied until after he had bought a round of cigars and exacted a promise that the matter would be taken up for a searching investigation and the facts given to the world in such a way they could be depended upon, and here's the answer: Roosevelt is the official name, blown in the bottle, the registered trademark and there is none genuine without it. Anybody who calls it "Tonto" is a "hins been" or has associated with the pioneers until he has grown careless. Mr. Davis may be forgiven for he is something of an old-timer himself, having prognosticated around these Arizona hills before most people knew they were on the map. In fact when this baby was first born it was christened "Tonto" and the name was changed only when the time came for the youngster to demand national recognition and beseech his old Uncle Sam for money with which to cut some figure in the world. Mr. Hill may be excused for he has met so many old-timers during construction work here that he has hard work sometimes to know where he is "at" in more serious things than the name of the dam site.

The name Tonto was originally given to the dam site because it is located very near the confluence of Tonto creek and Salt river. It seemed the natural name for it and every Arizonian accepted it as most appropriate, the more so as it was on the ground made historic by the Tonto Apaches. But down in Washington they have grown mighty finicky about names in these later years and everyone suggested for a postoffice or anything else wherein the government has a chance to give approval, has to measure up to the bureau boys. The name must not be too long, nor compounded and its meaning must be clear. Name words must have a good reputation if they get into polite official society. When the censors down in Washington found out that the word Tonto in the Apache language meant "fool," they went up in the air. It would never do to have the first and one of the greatest of the reclamation projects known as a "fool" project nor would it do to subject the project to the derision of the jester. And in hunting for a newer and better name there was none more appropriate for the first great project than that of the president who signed the reclamation bill. All the appropriations are made for the "Roosevelt" dam, all the official maps of it carry the legend "Roosevelt" dam, and the contract made with Mr. O'Rourke was for the construction of the "Roosevelt" dam.

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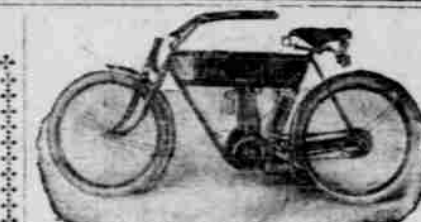
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